

## Chairman's Message

Work continues on the new Record Office and your committee has pledged £20,000 towards the community engagement requirement of the Heritage Lottery Fund's (HLF) request for £40,000. The other Suffolk Heritage organisations have also been generous to allow us to reach the total required very quickly. The first round bid put together by Amy Rush-ton and her colleagues was successful. Now we move onto the next round of fundraising and some of your committee were able to hear of the experience of the Gloucester Record Office Friends who have been down this same path.

I'm delighted to say that Tracy Hickey, has volunteered to sit on a fundraising committee of volunteers from all those heritage groups and others who value the wealth of Suffolk's archives. If you have skills in fundraising, or ideas about it, do please get in touch with Tracy. We need to raise about another £100,000 so grant applications are being made to trusts and other charities as well.

Committee members are meanwhile continuing to seek out documents to purchase despite the high prices being set in auctions and we are refining our wants and bid offers to reflect the new market. We are keen to have good relationships with auction houses and look to them to give us warning of any suitable items coming up for sale.

We are also keen to mobilise any Friends who might be willing to look for suitable items on eBay. Can you help us?

**Paul Simmons, Chairman.**

## New iPad Showcases Lowestoft Collections

The purchase of a new iPad by FOSRO for Lowestoft Record Office proved highly useful at a recent Local History Weekend in Beccles. Library Staff created a montage display of old photographs, with fascinating snippets of local information. Alongside the usual leaflets, a few street directories and maps, the iPad was also a great tool for displaying the fantastic new website. All the images, stories and the news features could be demonstrated to the public outside the search-room. The iPad also allowed collections to be taken to the event, in the form of a rolling slide show of photographs from the 1300 collection, showing Beccles from the 1890s right up to the 1970s and images of early documents from the Beccles Borough Collection 1227. An image of a dragon illustrated in the Beccles Fen Corporation Book of 1552 ref. 1227/1/3/1 proved to be a hit with visitors.

Dr. Helen Band, Public Service Manager at Lowestoft Record Office said "The iPad proved to be a great vehicle for showcasing the archives without the stress and fuss of moving the originals from the security of the strong room. Putting together the slide show proved to be quick and easy, unlike making a hard display. Not having to carry heavy boards was lovely! We will be using the iPad for other trips out including our Pop-Up Record Office in Halesworth in September. Now the staff have had time to use the iPad, who knows what we will use it for next? Thank you FOSRO for your kind gift, helping us get our collections out into the public sphere."



# Celebrating 30 years of Lowestoft Record Office

**Dr. Helen Band, Public Service Manager at the Lowestoft Record Office, looks back over its history.**



The Library Lecture Hall 1975

In December 2015 Lowestoft Record Office celebrated its thirtieth year. As early as 1973, the newly established Suffolk County Council acknowledged the need for a third branch to supplement the East and West branches at Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds. In 1983 a report by the County Archivist, Amanda Arrowsmith, explained the motivation behind the third branch; the expense and difficulty of travel to Ipswich from the North East of the county was cited, alongside "a widespread unwillingness of owners of records in this area to deposit them in an office in Ipswich. It seems probable that some unique material will not survive for posterity in the absence of a local branch to take it in".

In 1985 the call for funding was finally answered and Lowestoft Record Office was offered space in the reference area of Lowestoft Central Library which already housed a large local studies collection, a great deal of which has since become part of the Record Office's holdings.

Rosemary Rogers (now Steer) was appointed the first Archivist in Charge in September 1985, and she developed the service in conjunction with David Wright, Local Studies Librarian, with the assistance of Sue Francis and Liz Froggett. The office opened to the public on December 16th 1985. In June 1986 Kerry Meal was appointed to the search-room team. She is now our longest serving member of staff, celebrating her own anniversary of thirty years in the office this summer.

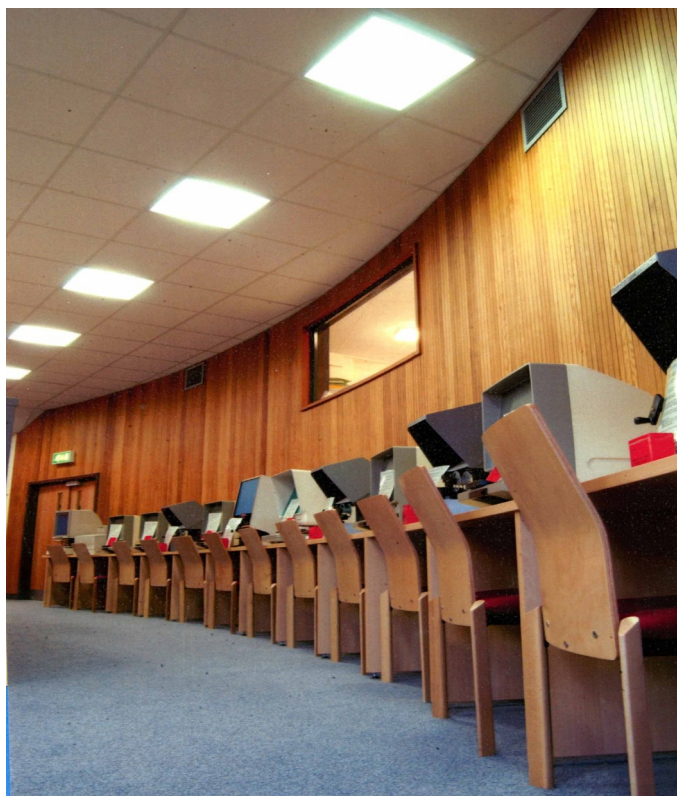
Once the Office was opened and the basement was converted to the strong-room, the first accession was 01, The Lowestoft Borough Collection, and records have flooded in ever since. In 1992 the strong-room was extended and an extra thirty-six shelves have been installed in 2016.

As part of the 'Ask Lowestoft Library' refurbishment in 2002, the Record Office moved to Oulton Broad Library in Bridge Street before moving back to the current searchroom in 2003 which was converted from a lecture theatre.

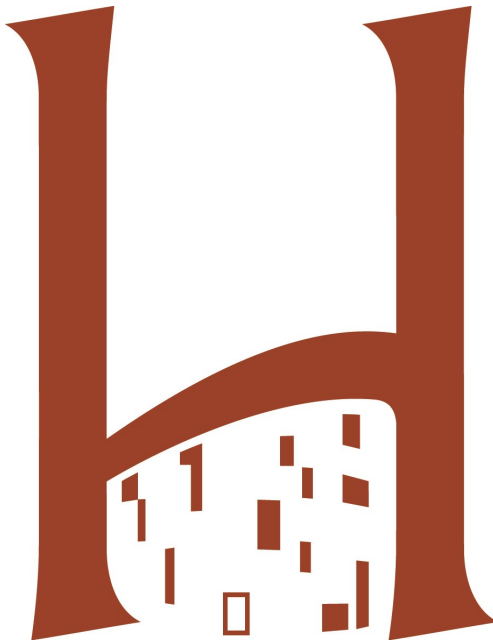
In 1996 Calm, a computerised collections management system, was introduced and is still used to catalogue and search our collections. In June 2016 our new website will be launched, expanding our service fully into the digital world. The website will work alongside Preservica, an innovative digital preservation system. Working with Preservica will mean Suffolk Record Office will be at the forefront of digital archival preservation. However the staff will still be here at Lowestoft, aiming to provide excellent service and access to our treasured archive collections for the people of North East Suffolk and the rest of the world.

*This report was compiled from display material written by Lowestoft Record Office staff, past and present.*

Microfilm Readers in current Search Room







# Update on new Heritage Centre

By now we hope you will have heard the wonderful news that the proposal for our new heritage centre, with the working title 'The Hold', has received initial support and a 'first-round pass' from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

This support includes development funding of £538,100 to help Suffolk County Council progress plans and apply for a full grant of £10.3m at a later date. Heritage Grant applications are assessed in two rounds; a first-round pass is given when HLF has endorsed outline proposals and earmarked funding. Detailed proposals are then considered by HLF at second-round and as long as plans have progressed satisfactorily and according to the original proposal, an award for the project is confirmed.

Located on the north campus of University Campus Suffolk (soon to be University of Suffolk!), the new facility will house the bulk of Suffolk's nationally and internationally significant archives and a range of archaeological records. As well as providing teaching and research space fit for the 21st Century, it will also form a unique visitor attraction and an important cultural resource for the community.



Working in close partnership with the university as it gains independence, 'The Hold' will not only completely transform the Record Office's ability to care for and showcase our county's records, but also to promote them and give access to a broader audience. Securing national recognition for and vital investment in these plans is fantastic and we are now a step closer to this exciting vision for our new heritage facility becoming a reality.

The project will also drive a new way for the Record Office to extend and deliver its outreach work; a county-wide activity programme called "Mapping Suffolk's Stories" will see Record Office staff and UCS work alongside a wide range of community groups, volunteers and schools, engaging them with

Suffolk's rich heritage in new and exciting ways, beginning with researching and digitising historic map collections.

Robyn Llewellyn, Head of HLF East of England, said: "With more than nine miles of archival material spanning nine centuries, Suffolk Record Office holds precious resources telling fascinating stories. 'The Hold' will be a beacon of discovery for everyone and throughout the county people will be able to get involved in using historic maps to learn about their own local area. Thanks to National Lottery players we're delighted to offer our support to this partnership project and look forward to seeing the plans develop."

Amy Rushton, HLF Project Coordinator, described the immediate tasks for the Development Phase of the project: "We are thrilled to be recruiting our Design Team who will develop the architectural and technical designs for the new building, as well as recruiting our new Activity Plan Officer to work with community groups across the county and carry forward proposals for 'Mapping Suffolk's Stories'. Of course, another high priority task at the moment is working with the Friends of Suffolk Record Office and other heritage organisations in setting up a fundraising committee for the project to meet our ambitious targets. With these tasks underway, the project will really gather momentum. And all this in the same year that our partner, UCS, gains independent status – these are very exciting times!"

'The Hold', which is one of the 21 key delivery projects of the 'Ipswich Vision', should open its doors in time for the 900th anniversary of the Record Office's oldest document, in late 2019.

You are warmly invited to the  
**Annual General Meeting**

of the **Friends of Suffolk Record Office**

WAD1, Floor 2,  
The Waterfront Building,  
University of Suffolk, Ipswich IP3 8AH.

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2016**

beginning at **5.30 pm.**

followed by refreshments before a **Public Lecture at 7pm** in partnership with the University of Suffolk.

Free Parking On site

**Friends**  
OF  
SUFFOLK  
RECORD  
OFFICE

Registered Charity No. 288042

## Committee

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Mrs Margaret Statham

Dr Nick Amor

Mr Vic Gray, MBE

Mrs Tracy Hickey

Mrs Sarah E Doig

<http://www.fosro.org.uk>

## New Website for Suffolk Record Office

After six months of development the new Suffolk Record Office website was launched in June. The site provides for an extended catalogue search along with regular news updates. *Suffolk Stories* is another feature of the new website, revealing the quirky stories unique to our county. Digital services, course booking and other new features will continue to develop. So check out the site and register today.



### FOR SALE

Bell & Howell ABR-VIII Microfiche

Offers over £15. All proceeds to FOSRO

Please contact Frances Gander,  
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*The Editor wishes to thank all contributors and everyone who supplied photographs. Design by Mrs Tracy Hickey.*